

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02  
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R 061050Z AUG 77  
FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9794  
INFO AMEMBASSY BISSAU  
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA  
AMEMBASSY LISBON  
AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIBREVILLE 2025

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINS, PINT, TP  
SUBJECT: GSTP RESHUFFLE RAISES NEW POLITICAL QUESTIONS

REF: LIBREVILLE 1818

SUMMARY: MINOR GSTP RESHUFFLE CREATES TWO CLEAR POWER CENTERS WITHIN GSTP, LEAVING PRESIDENT IN POSITION OF ARBITER BUT SOWING SEEDS OF POTENTIAL FUTURE CONFLICT. USAID PROGRAM COMES AT PARTICULARLY OPPORTUNE MOMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. GSTP LAST WEEK ANNOUNCED SERIES OF CHANGES IN COMPOSITION OF CABINET (DETAILS BY AIRGRAM) WHICH CONFIRM AUTHORITY OF PRIME MINISTER TROVOADA OVER MOST SECTORS OF GOVERNMENT, BUT FOR FIRST TIME MAKE EXPLICIT THAT DEFENSE AND INTERNAL SECURITY ARE INDEPENDENT OF HIS CONTROL.

2. FORMER MINISTER OF INTERIOR DANIEL DAIO RETAINS HIS CONTROL OVER POLICE AND ADDS NATIONAL DEFENSE

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TO HIS RESPONSIBILITES, THUS BRINGING ALL ORGANIZED SECURITY FORCES UNDER SINGLE HEAD. SINCE DAIO CONSIDERED MOST XENOPHOBIC AND ANTI WESTERN MEMBER OF GSTP, CONCENTRATION OF POWER IN HIS HANDS SETS STAGE FOR POTENTIAL FUTURE CLASH BETWEEN HIM AND RELATIVELY MODERATE TROVOADA.

3. STRENGHTENING OF DAIOS POSITION UNDERLINED BY  
DEPARTURE FROM CABINET OF MINISTER OF JUSTICE JOSE  
FRET LAU CHONG, ONE OF MOST MODERATE MEMBERS OF  
GSTP. CHONG WAS POLITICAL ALLY OF FORMER HEALTH  
MINISTER CARLOS DA GRACA, WHO QUIT GOVERNMENT IN  
JANUAR BECAUSE HE FELT HIS VIEWS WERE NOT BEING  
HEEDED.

4. FOUR NEW ADDITIONS TO GOVERNMENT ARE ESSENTIALLY  
TECHNICIANS WHO APPEAR RELATIVELY WELL QUALIFIED  
FOR THEIR JOBS. ONLY OTHER DEPARTURE IS FORMER  
SECSTATE FOR AGRICULTURE, WHO REPORTEDLY HAD AMPLY  
DEMONSTRATED HIS INCOMPETENCE.

5. COMMENT: TROVOADA AND DAIO REPRESENT TWO ELEMENTS  
WITHIN GSTP WHICH HAVE BEEN COMPETING FOR POWER AND  
INFLUENCE SINCE BEFORE INDEPENDENCE. FORMER CURRENT,  
MORE OR LESS HEADED BY TROVOADA, SEEKS TO TMEPER  
BASICALLY SOCIALIST OPTION OF GSTP BY MAINTIING  
LINKS TO WEST: LATTER, XENOPHOBIC AND VISCRALLY  
ANTI-WESTERN SEEMINGLY WISHES TO SEVER  
REMAINING TIES TO WESTERN WORLD. BY TEMPERAMENT MOST SAO  
TOMEANS WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY PREFER MORE  
PRAGMATIC APPROACH ADVOCATED BY PRIME MINISTER,  
BUT INFLUENCE OF DAIO HAS CLEARLY BEEN RISING  
WITHIN GSTP. DPEARUTRE FROM GOVERNMENT OF DA GRACA  
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AND CHONG, TWO OF MOST MODERATE MEMBERS, AND  
NOTABLE INCREASE IN "ANTI IMPERIALIST" SLOGANEERING  
(SEE REFTEL) WERE PRELUDE TO CURRENT  
CONCENTRATION IN DAIOS HANDS OF CONTROL OVER ALL  
SECURITY FORCES.

6. FUTURE COURSE OF EVENTS NOW MORE THAN EVER IN  
HANDS OF PRESIDENT DA COSTA, WHOSE POSITION AS  
ULTIMATE ARBITER BETWEEN CONTENDING FACTIONS  
REMAINS INTACT BUT PERHAPS MORE FRAGILE THAN  
BEFORE IN FACE OF INCREASED POWER NOW HELD BY  
DAIO. DA COSTA APPEARS PERSONALLY TO BE MORE IN  
SYMPATHY WITH VIEWS OF PRAGMATISTS THAN WITH  
HARD LINE ADVOCATED BY DAIO, BUT THERE IS NO EVIDENCE  
TO DATE THAT PRESIDENT HAS ANY DESIRE TO ABANDON  
HIS LONG STANDING POSITION AS RELAIVELY NEUTRAL  
ARBITER IN ORDER TO JOIN THE FRAY.

7. UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES, US AID PROGRAM COMES AT  
OPPORTUNE MOMENT AS DEMONSTRATION OF CONTINUING  
WESTERN INTEREST IN FUTURE OF SAO TOME. LOW KEY  
ASSISTANCE FOR AGRCULTURAL SECTOR, WITH MINIMAL

AMERICAN PRESENCE, LOOKS FROM HERE LIKE IDEAL  
PROGRAM FOR TESTING WATERS AND FOR LENDING  
INCIDENTAL ENCOURAGEMENT TO THOSE WHO WANT TO  
KEEP DOORS OPEN TO WESTERN WORLD. STEIGMAN

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## Message Attributes

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Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009